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So you'd like to... Read the Ten Longest Novels Ever Written

A guide by [Cervantes625](#) (Indiana)

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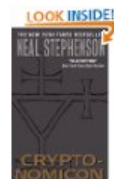
Products sampled from this guide:



The Stand: Expanded Edition: For the First Time Complete and Uncut (Signet)



The Count of Monte Cristo (Penguin Classics)



Cryptonomicon

> See all 26 products mentioned in this guide below

Introduction

This list is generally correct, I believe, but much of it is made from approximations or guesswork. Some of the novels may be out of order a little bit, perhaps a place or two, but I tried to place each book as right as I possibly could. In other words, I'm sure there is a margin of error here.

I tried not to use the page count as the way to determine the length of the novel, but the number of words. Page counts can greatly differ from different publishers and formats. The word count will always remain the same and is therefore the most accurate way to determine length. Occasionally though I couldn't find a word or character count for a novel and I would have to rely on page count alone, this is where approximations come in but I tried my best to get it accurate.

Unless I mention otherwise I haven't personally read the book. I'm just here to inform you on length not quality so if you want to read the book you might want to check out different copies or in the case of non-English books, find the best translations.

I'm trying to update this list from time to time if I find a book I've never heard of that is very long. I haven't heard of every book ever written obviously so there are probably a couple of enormous volumes out there that should be on the list that I don't know about. If I ever come across them I'll put them on here.

Strong contenders that didn't quite make the top 10: [The Stand: Expanded Edition: For the First Time Complete and Uncut \(Signet\)](#) by Stephen King (464, 218 words; 1,168 pg.) [The Count of Monte Cristo \(Penguin Classics\)](#) by Alexandre Dumas (464, 234 words; 1,312 pg.) [Cryptonomicon](#) by Neal Stephenson (1,168 pg.) [Sacajawea \(Lewis & Clark Expedition\)](#) by Anna L. Waldo (1,424 pg.) [Shogun](#) by James Clavell (1,210 pg.) [Gai-Jin](#) by James Clavell (1,248 pg.) [The Lord of the Rings](#) by J.R.R. Tolkien (?470,000? words; 1,200 pg.)

And Now for the Top Ten Longest Novels

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Ten: Infinite Jest

[Infinite Jest: A Novel](#) by David Foster Wallace

Has 479,198 words (Wikipedia) and this specific edition is 1,088 pages in length, making "Infinite Jest" number ten on the list.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Nine: War and Peace

[War and Peace \(Signet Classics\)](#) by Leo Tolstoy

Probably the most famous novel on this list for being extremely long, it surprisingly didn't even make it into the top five. At 560,000 words (Wikipedia) it still is a gigantic novel. This specific edition is 1,456 pages in length.

About this Guide

Author



[Cervantes625](#) (Indiana)

Qualifications: English Major

Last updated: 4/19/07

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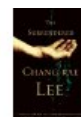
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Number Eight: Les Miserables

[Les Miserables](#) ☒ by Victor Hugo

I couldn't find a word or character count for "Les Miserables" but with 1,463 pages in this edition it beats out "War and Peace." I am sure that "Les Miserables" is longer because I compared the page count with "War and Peace" both books being by the same publisher (Signet) and of the same size and format.

This is one of the few books on this guide that I have actually read myself and can say that it is excellent. Definitely my favorite novel by a French author. The length may be somewhat daunting but it is worth the effort to read. Like climbing a mountain.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Seven: A Suitable Boy

[A Suitable Boy](#) ☒ by Vikram Seth

With 591,554 words (Wikipedia) "A Suitable Boy" grabs the number seven spot. This specific edition is 1,488 pages in length.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Six: Atlas Shrugged

[Atlas Shrugged](#) ☒ by Ayn Rand

According to Wikipedia this novel has approx. 645,000 words, but I'm not sure if it is quite that many. This specification is 1,200 pages in length, so unless it has very small print with almost no margin I doubt if it is quite that length, so this may be higher up on the list than it should be.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Five: Joseph and His Brothers

[Joseph and His Brothers: The Stories of Jacob, Young Joseph, Joseph in Egypt, Joseph the Provider](#) ☒ by Thomas Mann

This edition from everyman's library is 1,536 pages in length. Unknown word or character count.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Four: Clarissa

[Clarissa: Or the History of a Young Lady \(Penguin Classics\)](#) ☒ by Samuel Richardson

According to Wikipedia this novel has about 5,500,000 characters or somewhere over 1,000,000+ words. This edition by Penguin is 1,536 pages in length. This is conventionally considered the longest novel in English, but that is disputable with the number three candidate.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number Three: Mission Earth

[The Invaders Plan \(Mission Earth Series, Vol 1\)](#) ☒ [Black Genesis: Mission Earth Volume 2](#) ☒ [The Enemy Within \(Mission Earth\)](#) ☒ [Alien Affair \(Mission Earth\)](#) ☒ [Fortune of Fear: Mission Earth Volume 5](#) ☒ [Death Quest: Mission Earth Volume 6](#) ☒ [Voyage of Vengeance: Mission Earth Volume 7](#) ☒ [Disaster: Mission Earth Volume 8](#) ☒ [Villainy Victorious: Mission Earth Volume 9](#) ☒ [The Doomed Planet \(Mission Earth\)](#) ☒ by L. Ron Hubbard

The Mission Earth Series, I know what you are thinking, it is a series not just one novel. Well it is true that it has been published in a whopping 10 volumes, the truth is it was only split up for publication and originally written as a single 1.2 million word novel. This is disputable with Clarissa which as I said is conventionally considered the longest novel in the English language, but if Mission Earth is considered one novel than it would technically beat it.



[My Silver Lining in An Otherwise Cloudy Life](#): A list of 10 items by [Femme Fatale](#)



[1000+ \(plenty of pages to peruse\)](#): A list of 40 items by [blueemerald](#)



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[A different perspective in Business Strategy](#): A list of 10 items by [Jose Ernesto Passos](#)



[Classic books I have read--List 1](#): A list of 37 items by [Bibliophile](#)

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Number Two: The Man Without Qualities

[The Man Without Qualities \(2 volume set\)](#)  by Robert Musil

Although published in two volumes it is a single novel. This edition is 1,774 pages in length. I don't have an actual word or character count for this one, but at over 1,700 pages it is undoubtedly number two on the list.

> See products from this section at the bottom of the page

Number One: In Search of Lost Time

[In Search of Lost Time: Proust 6-pack \(Proust Complete\)](#)  by Marcel Proust

This novel, while generally published in several volumes is considered a single novel and is in the Guinness Book of World Records for being the longest novel.

I'm not sure of the exact number of words in the book, but according to Guinness it has a total of 9,609,000 characters (including spaces) which I estimate to be around 3,000,000 words or so (this estimate is due to Clarissa, which is over 1,000,000 words and about one-third the number of pages of In Search of Lost Time, but I'm bad at math so I'm probably off). This novel is approx. 4,800 pages in length.

Products mentioned include:

Introduction



1. [The Stand: Expanded Edition: For the First Time Complete and Uncut \(Signet\)](#) by Stephen King

Used & New from: \$0.01

★★★★★  (2,461) | [16 customer discussions](#)

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2. [The Count of Monte Cristo \(Penguin Classics\)](#) by Alexander Dumas

\$8.75 Used & New from: \$2.75

★★★★★  (1,645) | [8 customer discussions](#)

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3. [Cryptonomicon](#) by Neal Stephenson

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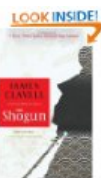
4. [Sacajawea \(Lewis & Clark Expedition\)](#) by Anna Lee Waldo

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★★★★★  (186)

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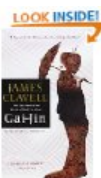
5. [Shogun](#) by James Clavell

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★★★★★  (931) | [4 customer discussions](#)

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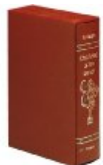
6. [Gai-Jin](#) by James Clavell

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7. [The Lord of the Rings](#) by Brian Sibley
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★★★★★ ☒ (6,915) | [27 customer discussions](#)

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Number Ten: Infinite Jest

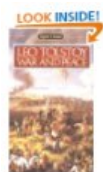


8. [Infinite Jest: A Novel](#) by David Foster Wallace
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★★★★★ ☒ (802) | [13 customer discussions](#)

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Number Nine: War and Peace



9. [War and Peace \(Signet Classics\)](#) by Leo Tolstoy
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★★★★★ ☒ (21) | [16 customer discussions](#)

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Number Eight: Les Miserables

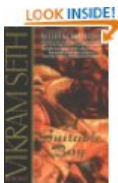


10. [Les Miserables \[Unabridged\]](#) by Victor Hugo
Used & New from: ~~\$0.01~~
★★★★★ ☒ (436) | [3 customer discussions](#)

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Number Seven: A Suitable Boy

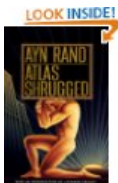


11. [A Suitable Boy](#) by Vikram Seth
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★★★★★ ☒ (284) | [3 customer discussions](#)

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Number Six: Atlas Shrugged



12. [Atlas Shrugged](#) by Ayn Rand
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★★★★★ ☒ (4,930) | [58 customer discussions](#)

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Number Five: Joseph and His Brothers



13. [Joseph and His Brothers: The Stories of Jacob, Young Joseph, Joseph in Egypt, Joseph the Provider](#) by John Woods
\$31.95 Used & New from: ~~\$25.00~~
★★★★★ ☒ (41)

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Number Four: Clarissa



14. [Clarissa: Or the History of a Young Lady \(Penguin Classics\)](#) by Angus Ross
\$18.72 Used & New from: ~~\$3.83~~
★★★★★ ☒ (54)

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Number Three: Mission Earth



15. [The Invaders Plan \(Mission Earth Series, Vol 1\)](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$0.01
★★★★☆ ☒ (108)

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16. [Black Genesis: Mission Earth Volume 2](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$0.01
★★★★☆ ☒ (37)

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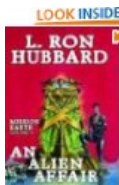


17. [The Enemy Within \(Mission Earth\)](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$2.25
★★★★☆ ☒ (18)

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18. [Alien Affair \(Mission Earth\)](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$2.95
★★★★☆ ☒ (23)

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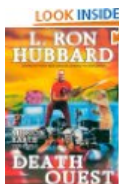


19. [Fortune of Fear: Mission Earth Volume 5](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$0.01
★★★★☆ ☒ (24)

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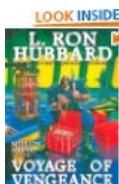


20. [Death Quest: Mission Earth Volume 6](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

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★★★★☆ ☒ (14)

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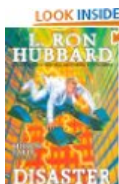


21. [Voyage of Vengeance: Mission Earth Volume 7](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$0.01
★★★★☆ ☒ (19)

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22. [Disaster: Mission Earth Volume 8](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$0.01
★★★★☆ ☒ (12)

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23. [Villainy Victorious: Mission Earth Volume 9](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$2.89
★★★★☆ ☒ (13)

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24. [The Doomed Planet \(Mission Earth\)](#) by L. Ron Hubbard

Used & New from: \$3.12

★★★★☆ (15)

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Number Two: The Man Without Qualities



25. [The Man Without Qualities \(2 volume set\) \[Box set\]](#) by Robert Musil

Used & New from: \$44.95

★★★★★ (17)

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Number One: In Search of Lost Time



26. [In Search of Lost Time: Proust 6-pack \(Proust Complete\)](#) by Marcel Proust

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